

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 834

By Langster

A RESOLUTION to honor the life and accomplishments of William James Gupton on the occasion of his induction into the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those citizens who, through unwavering dedication and unflagging commitment to excellence, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person, now deceased, was legendary coach William James Gupton, who devoted more than two decades of his life to the education and instruction of young students and athletes in Tennessee; on March 18, 2006, Mr. Johnson will be posthumously inducted into the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Hall of Fame (TSSAA), a recognition most befitting of his outstanding service to Tennessee high schools; and

WHEREAS, Bill Gupton graduated from Clarksville's Burt High School in 1930, and from Tennessee A & I State University in 1935, where he also completed his post-graduate education in 1956; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, Coach Gupton commenced his illustrious, twenty-two year coaching career at Pearl High School in Nashville, serving as Head Coach of the Boy's Varsity Basketball team; and

WHEREAS, thanks to his dedication and capable coaching abilities, Coach Gupton led his varsity team to victory in State Tournaments eleven times in twenty-two years; with a total win-loss record of 443 victories and 107 losses over the course of his career, Coach Gupton led his teams to win in eighty-one percent of the games played; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, 1959, and 1960, Coach Bill Gupton's teams won three consecutive National Tournaments and retired the rotating Henry A. Kean Trophy; following the 1958-59 season the Converse Yearbook ranked Pearl High School number one in the nation; and

WHEREAS, a member of the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, Coach Gupton was no stranger to accolades; indeed, he was named Coach of the Year six times on the state level and three times on the national level; and

WHEREAS, Coach Gupton's legendary career as a basketball coach will be remembered for years to come, as six of the players he so ably coached went on to coach teams in Nashville themselves; one coached at the college level and five coached at the senior and junior high level in Metropolitan Public Schools; these players are: Ronnie Lawson, Leroy Wright, Cornelius Ridley, Claxton Starnes, Walter Pope, and Leon Bradley, and

WHEREAS, the first statewide basketball tournament in Tennessee was held in 1939 at Pearl High School; at that time the governing organization was known as the Tennessee Colored Secondary School Athletic Association (TCSAA), which later became the Tennessee High School Athletic Association (THSAA). The eventual merger of THSAA and TSSAA took place in large part due to the influence of Bill Gupton, then president of the THSAA, and the organization has since been known as TSSAA; and

WHEREAS, not only is this remarkable man acclaimed for his success as a coach, he is also remembered for his excellence as a teacher and administrator during his thirty-six year tenure with the Nashville Metropolitan School System, from which he retired in 1971; and

WHEREAS, the significance of Bill Gupton's dedication to excellence cannot be adequately measured by winning seasons alone; his positive impact on the lives of students, athletes, fellow teachers, and administrators still resounds in the community today; and

WHEREAS, his educational, athletic and civic endeavors aside, Bill Gupton always maintained the highest family values and was most grateful for the love and companionship of his wife, Dorothy; he was also the loving father of William J. "Champ" Gupton, Jr., so named by the Pearl High School basketball team because he was born on the night Pearl won the 1959 State Championship; and

WHEREAS, for the above accomplishments, his impeccable moral standards, and impressive work ethic, Coach Bill Gupton has been selected for posthumous induction into the TSSAA Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Bill Gupton, as a man of true character and commitment, exemplified the type of selfless community leader whom fellow Tennesseans admire for their tireless efforts to mold this State's youth, guiding them with solid principles and high standards, whether on the athletic fields or in the classroom; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join in honoring the life and accomplishments of William James Gupton on the occasion of his induction into the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Hall of Fame, reflecting fondly upon his substantial legacy as a teacher, administrator, coach, and human being.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.